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ABSTRACT

Sociology education at two-year colleges is examined as revealed in a study of science education conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges that involved: (1) a review of the literature, (2) an examination of catalogs and class schedules from 175 institutions nationwide, and (3) a survey of 94 sociology instructors. The report first analyzes the literature dealing with sociology curricula, pointing to the need for community college sociologists to provide differing streams of instruction for traditional transfer students and non-major, non-transfer students. Curriculum data gathered from the catalogs and schedules are then presented, revealing that while sociology accounts for only 4% of all science courses offered, 100% of the colleges list at least one sociology course. General principle courses are the most widely offered, followed by general social problems, marriage and family, specific social problems, sociology of groups, and general theory. The report then considers sociology instruction as revealed in the literature and the instructor survey. Areas discussed in this section include instructional goals and objectives, class size, teaching methodology, classroom activities, reading materials, testing and grading, faculty experience and workload, and use of media. Data tables, a bibliography, and the survey instrument are included. (JP)

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SCIENCE EDUCATION IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES:

SOCIOLOGY

by

Andrew Hill

February 1980

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SCIENCE EDUCATION IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES:

SOCIOLOGY

Two-year community and junior colleges enroll more than four million students, one-third of all students in American higher education. Current figures show that 40 percent of all first-time, full-time students are in two-year colleges. When the people beginning college as part-time students and those attending the two-year college concurrently with or subsequent to their enrolling in a senior institution are added to this number, the first-year students taking two-year college courses approximate two-thirds of all freshmen.

In addition to size, community colleges, with their open-door admission policy, have attracted an extremely diverse student population who enroll in a wide range of courses (transfer, occupational, remedial, continuing education, community service, and terminal degree). The size and diversity of the community college student population has important implications for those concerned with transfer-oriented sociology education as well as for those concerned with raising the general level of sociological literacy.

This monograph is part of a National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsored study of science education in community, junior, and technical colleges in the United States. The study, conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, was designed to provide a comprehensive picture of curriculum and instruction in the two-year college. A literature review of the most important studies of two-year college science education was conducted to determine what was already known about curriculum and instruction in the sciences (agriculture, biology, engineering, mathematics and computer sciences, chemistry, earth and space sciences, physics, interdisciplinary studies, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and economics). Curriculum data were gathered from the catalogues and class schedules of a representative national sample of 175 colleges. A

random sample of science instructors in the 175 colleges were surveyed to determine instructional practices and to obtain some information on the science faculty.

This monograph is concerned with the current state of sociology education in two-year colleges. The field will be broken into two areas, curriculum and instruction, and each section will review the pertinent literature, report the findings of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges study, and discuss trends and implications stemming from both the literature and the data. A complete description of the methodologies employed in this study is available from the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, UCLA, 96 Powell Library, Los Angeles, California 90024.

PART I

THE CURRICULUM

Sociology is a widely accepted part of the curriculum in every level of higher education, despite the fact that as a discipline it is one of the "younger" sciences. During the tumultuous social upheavals this country experienced in the 1960s the discipline of sociology took on great esteem and popularity as the populace sought logical explanations to the problems and crises confronting society. Course offerings expanded, sociology faculties grew, and shortages of qualified sociologists were projected for the future.

Yet, as the social fires that raged in the '60s slowly cooled, many of the social problems lay dormant but unsolved. Sociologists who promised answers in the '60s could only offer explanations in the '70s.

Perhaps this is why "As a discipline, sociology often finds itself a maligned, misunderstood field" (Stein, 1977, p. 16).

THE LITERATURE

Historically, the origins of the discipline were related to the solution of problems. As Smelser and Davis (1969) note, "At the beginning the discipline was closely linked to the impulse to ameliorate social problems emanating from immigration, race relations, poverty, and crime" (p. 108). In the minds of most people with little exposure to sociology, this remains the primary objective of the discipline. But sociology has matured and evolved as a science, and while the mathematical and biological bases of the discipline have dramatically increased, it is doubtful that public awareness has kept pace with the changing face of the discipline. These alliances with other scientific disciplines lead Ellis (1977, p. 56) to grimly predict in a futuristic look at the discipline that "by the end of the 20th century, essentially nothing remained of sociology with the academic community." The boundaries of the discipline are unclearly defined (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977), and there are those who feel that the establishment of boundaries is essential for the survival of the discipline (Stein, 1977).

While Ellis' assertion seems overly pessimistic, if only in light of the fact that change within the academic community is invariably ponderous, it may well portend a decrease in the acceptance and popularity of sociology in higher education. The direction of content of both undergraduate sociological education and sociological research "needs to be evaluated if sociology is to continue its development as a heuristic and relevant discipline for both society and higher education" (Stewart, 1971, p. 9). The question of content would be easier to answer if clear disciplinary boundaries could be established but, to date, sociology departments "flatly reject boundary stances that would clearly delineate sociology from other disciplines" (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977, p. 8).

Fortunately, it seems that the sociological community is aware that "all is not well with undergraduate sociology" (Campbell, Kaufman,

Gilchrist, Hancock, Klobas, & Sundgren, 1977, p. 61). The American Sociological Association has taken a strong interest in the investigation of undergraduate curriculum and instruction, and has specifically formed a Task Group to study the processes and strategies that are involved in the development of an undergraduate curriculum (McPherron, 1977).

That the efforts of the ASA are both timely and important is unquestioned, but the academic community as a whole has been reticent to attack the problems involved in restructuring the curriculum. Campbell et al. (1977) note the irony of this situation:

> Indeed, there is little information to guide us at all, for research into the effects of curricular organization is woefully lacking. Not to know, however, does not usually produce in us so passive a state. It is customary to attack ignorance with scholarship, experimentation, and the methods of science (p. 51).

While other sectors of the academic community may find their curricula in a similar state, Campbell et al. observe that sociologists should be particularly aware of the importance of the curriculum. "It is interesting that as sociologists we spend much of our time investigating the structural aspects of social order, but it seldom occurs to most of us that the organization of a curriculum might be of pedagogical importance" (1977, pp. 50-51). In fact, only one out of ten community college sociology departments has a written curriculum plan (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1978).

Perhaps one explanation for the reluctance of sociologists in the community college to focus on curricular issues is the fact that the arrangement of courses and setting of goals is a group process (Campbell et al., 1977). The fact that these processes are dependent upon group behaviors presents problems in the community college, because the faculty "have become isolated within their own institutions. The community college teacher has become a recluse" (Cohen, 1976).

In reviewing the literature it is clear that community college sociology faculty are isolated not only from each other, but from the

discipline as well (Davenport, 1971; Mauksch, 1977). Two major studies of sociology curriculum ignore two-year colleges entirely (Reid & Bates, 1971; Smelser & Davis, 1969).

But while community college faculty might be justified in their disinterest or feelings of impotence regarding shaping curriculum, this lack of disciplinary involvement carries over into teaching as well. Insofar as two-year colleges pride themselves on their innovativeness and commitment to teaching, one might imagine that the two-year college sociology faculty would be major consumers of a journal that focuses entirely on teaching sociology. Sadly, this is not the case. The editor of Teaching Sociology, Gelles (1979), comments that one of the recurrent questions is why more community college faculty do not subscribe to, or submit articles for publication in, Teaching Sociology.

One might wonder why the two-year college sociologists' lack of concern is a matter of such importance, especially in relation to curriculum formation. Booth (1971) explains that:

> There will be little persistent action to improve the sociological curriculum in community colleges if the source of the change comes primarily from four year colleges and universities. The stimulus for action should come from a network of community college sociologists who combine competencies and interests in sociology with competencies and interests in community college education (p. 5).

What are some of the reasons why changes in the curriculum are necessary, and what is the major thrust of the changes? The major change seems to be away from the transfer-oriented approach where the curriculum is geared for university-bound sociology majors. For one thing, it is clear that only a small percentage of two-year college students actually transfer to a four-year college or university (Knoell et al., 1976). Unfortunately, articulating courses with four-year colleges continues to be a major curriculum restraint as well as a possible cause of low faculty morale in two-year colleges (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977).

Even assuming a fairly large group of transfer students, the fact is that "most students in sociology, including majors, are not serious about the field as a future occupation" (Linsky & Straus, 1973, p. 111). That more sociologists find their employment in the educational system than scholars from any other discipline (Reid & Bates, 1971; Smelser & Davis, 1969) presents a grim picture for the future of sociology if the primary objective of the curriculum is the production of more sociologists, as the educational system is not a good source of employment in this current period of retrenchment.

The need to restructure the curriculum to build skills and competencies applicable outside the academic community seems particularly relevant in the two-year college setting. As the curriculum exists today,

> Most community colleges offer courses in sociology in Introductory Sociology, Social Problems, and The Family. These are core courses for undergraduates in four year colleges and universities. But they may not be the best courses for a community college sociology faculty if our objective is to contribute to the education of both faculty and students, nor contribute to the general education of community college students (Booth, 1971, p. 6).

Even from a four-year college perspective there is a realization that curriculum goals need reshaping. Leibert and Bayer (1975, p. 204) predict that "a greater emphasis on vocational and community service goals will likely develop in sociology," and Rippetoe (1977) suggests that departments of sociology rethink and redefine their objectives. McFaul et al. (1977) developed a set of goals and objectives to serve as a point of departure for the departmental review process, which is seen as a form of faculty renewal as well as a means of curriculum revitalization. Another major reason why most colleges need to rethink their own sociology courses is that "for the overwhelming majority of students we confront in the course this is likely to be their single encounter with sociology during their educational careers" (Mariampolski, 1978, p. 141).

Given all these difficulties, what types of curricular alternatives can meet the incredibly diverse needs and abilities that exist in the

typical two-year college constituency? As a basic premise, it is clear that "sociology's role in general education is far more important than continuity with graduate school" (McPherron, 1977, p. 9).

If one momentarily dismisses the obvious articulation problems that any radical departure from the current four-year college influenced curriculum creates, and tries to envision a curriculum that meets more of the "vast array of goals which the departments are trying to meet" (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977, p. 18), alternative curricula take on increased viability. In their report to the National Academy of Sciences and the Social Science Research Council, Smelser and Davis (1969) recommended that the curriculum in sociology departments be diversified into "streams of instruction" so that they would better correspond with the interests and career plans of their students. A variation of this would be to restructure courses into concept-related learning packages, with some of the packages relating to traditional concepts and others relating to areas of vocational or personal interest (Keith, 1976).

Whatever form that curriculum changes take, Kohout (1977) proposes that sociology must move away from the "vocational model." This model assumes that students are preparing for graduate work, and merely pays "lip service" to non-majors. Kohout claims that "By contrast with the natural sciences, sociologists appear to be moving quite slowly away from the vocational model" (1977, p. 39).

Although the transfer-oriented courses that dominate the curriculum are probably inappropriate for the bulk of students, there are some students who will continue to desire more traditional offerings. It may become commonplace to use prerequisites as entry level blocks to these courses. The literature makes little note of prerequisites in sociology, but Garlock (1977) does report that entry blocks do decrease dropout rates and improve grades. However, they also lead to declining enrollments, so alternative courses must be developed in conjunction with the implementation of prerequisites.

While most of the sociology literature speculates on what the state-of-the-art is or should be, there is only a small amount of knowledge

about the sociology courses that are offered and the availability of sociology courses in general. One point is clear--it is almost impossible to find a two-year college that does not offer at least one sociology course. Thornton (1960) found that 97 percent of the public colleges he studied had a sociology course listed in the catalog. In 1962, 14 out of the 15 two-year colleges in Iowa offered a sociology course (Stoddard, 1968), and by 1972, Thornton revealed that 100 percent of the public colleges in his sample listed a sociology course, and offered courses that averaged a total of 10.3 units.

In a study of two-year college sociology programs in the South, Davenport (1971) found that the introductory course was by far the most frequently offered (at 95 percent of the colleges studied). Social Problems was the next most popular (31%), followed by Marriage and the Family (28%). No other sociology courses were widely offered in the South. The first course is not only widely offered, it is also very popular in terms of enrollments. Bradshaw and McPherron (1978) report the average two-year college offers 10.2 sections of the first course (Elementary, Introductory, General Principles, etc.) per academic year.

Although Davenport found only three courses to be popular, other researchers have indicated that a broader range of courses are available in two-year colleges. "In fact, community colleges often offer more sociology courses in the first and second year than other institutions" (Stein, 1977, p. 26). The range of courses offered can also present problems in that at times there are simply "too many courses and too few faculty" (McPherron, 1977, p. 8).

While there appears to be little in the way of concrete evidence to support Garlock's (1977) claim that sociology enrollments are rapidly shrinking, the tone of pessimism in much of the recent literature would tend to support this view. It is hoped that the documentation in this report will provide a baseline measure of sociology education in two-year colleges so that researchers can accurately gauge the progress in this field.

METHODOLOGY

The Sample

The first step in our study of the curriculum in two-year colleges was to assemble a representative sample of colleges. An earlier study conducted for the National Endowment for the Humanities by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges was used as the starting point. This study had already assembled a sample (balanced by college control, region and size) of 178 colleges. Using this sample as the initial group, the presidents of these colleges were invited to participate in the current study. Acceptances were received from 144 of these schools.

At this point a matrix was drawn up with cells representing nine college size categories for each of six regions of the country. Using the 1977 Community, Junior and Technical College Directory (AACJC, 1977), the ideal size/region breakdown for a 175-college sample was calculated. The remaining 31 colleges were selected by arraying all colleges in the underrepresented cells and randomly selecting the possible participants. This technique produced a balanced sample of 175 two-year colleges. Table 1 shows how close our sample is to the percentage breakdowns of the nation's two-year colleges. The list of participating colleges is found in Appendix A.

Procedure

College catalogs and class schedules for the 1977-78 academic year were obtained from each of the 175 schools. A unique system for analyzing, classifying, and reporting the course offerings was developed to deal with science courses in terms of both the unique features of the two-year colleges and the traditional science disciplines.*

The general structure of this system and the procedure for classifying a course are briefly described here as a preface to the detailed description of the categories within sociology.

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*For a full report of the methodologies employed, see Hill & Mooney, 1979 (ED 167 235).

Table 1

Percentage Breakdown of 175-College Sample Compared to National Percentages by Size, Region and Control

	Size								
	1-499	500-999	1,000-1,499	1,500-2,400	2,500-4,999	5,000-7,499	7,500-9,999	10,000-14,999	15,000+
National %	15	18	13	17	17	8	5	5	4
Sample	13	16	13	17	19	9	5	6	4

	Region					
	Northeast	Middle States	South	Mid-West	Mountain Plains	West
National %	7	13	32	21	10	17
Sample	6	12	31	22	13	16

	Control	
	Public	Private
National %	84	16
Sample	84	16

Course Classification System in the Sciences

Based upon the catalog course description, each science course listed in the catalog was placed into one of six major curriculum areas: Agriculture, Biological Sciences, Engineering Sciences and Technologies, Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Social and Behavior Sciences. These areas were chosen because they closely reflect the instructional administrative organization of two-year colleges as well as the organization of national and international professional science organizations and agencies, such as the National Science Foundation.

The second level of classification was concerned with the major subject field disciplines within the broad area. For example, the social and behavioral sciences are subdivided into Anthropology and Archaeology, Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, and History, Philosophy, and Sociology of Science.

The proliferation of course titles in sociology made it necessary to form categories that would encompass closely-related courses. The following breakdown explains which courses are included in this study. It should be noted that course inclusion was based upon the catalog description, and not limited to classes offered by the department of sociology.

SOCIOLOGY COURSES

Includes courses and programs that study the development, structure, interaction, and collective behavior of groups of individuals, and the analysis of social institutions. Courses may incorporate the personal relevancy of sociological principles and theory, but courses that have as their primary focus personal applications, human relations skills, or counseling skills are not included. Field practicum and independent study courses are also not included because it is impossible to evaluate the actual scientific content of these courses.

Elementary
General/Principles
Social Problems/General
Marriage and Family
Social Institutions
Social Problems/Specific
Social Institutions-Specific
Sociology of Group
Other

ELEMENTARY

A general course in sociological theory. Similar to courses described as General/Principles except that Introductory courses meet one or more of the following criteria: (1) the course is not a prerequisite for any other course(s); (2) practical applications are considered as much as theory; (3) the college's curriculum includes a more intensive general sociology course; (4) the course is specifically designed for non-majors; or (5) it is a one-semester, terminal course.

GENERAL/PRINCIPLES

A general introductory course designed to familiarize the student with the basic sociological concepts, theories, and methods. Although this course is most commonly a part of the required curriculum for social science majors, it is also a suggested elective or required course in a wide range of non-social science major fields, including some vocational and technology-oriented courses of study.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS/GENERAL

Courses utilizing sociological concepts and methods in the investigation and analysis of major social problems, including methods for alleviating social problems. Courses that concentrate on a single problem (e.g., delinquency) are classified as Social Problems/Specific.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

A sociological analysis of the family and its forms and functions. The course typically analyzes marital practices and family structures in a variety of cultural settings, and may investigate the extent to which societal customs and mores affect the individual's conceptualization of these areas. Courses that primarily emphasize the student's personal feelings and thoughts about marriage and family, or courses intending to provide a framework for a "successful" marriage, are not included. Usually offered as a social science elective by the sociology department, but these courses are sometimes offered through the home economics department.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS/GENERAL

The study of a variety of social institutions, usually focusing on theoretical and cross-cultural perspectives of education, religion, and the family. Courses that focus on a single social institution are categorized under either Marriage and Family or Social Institutions/Specific.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS/SPECIFIC

The study of the sociological bases of specific problems in our society (e.g., crime, delinquency, drugs, alcohol, cities, overpopulation). Classes directed specifically towards law enforcement personnel, classes that focus primarily on the treatment of a problem (e.g., juvenile corrections, drug counseling), and classes that are geared towards informing the student about the personal dangers of a problem (e.g., drug abuse) are not included. Law enforcement classes that use a sociological perspective to investigate a problem and are open to the general student body (e.g., criminology) are included.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS/SPECIFIC

The study of a single social institution (e.g., religion, education, medicine) and the social factors that affect groups and individuals interacting within these institutions. The institution of family is widely studied, and hence is categorized separately under Marriage and Family.

SOCIOLOGY OF GROUP

Most courses in this category are concerned with presenting a sociological perspective on a particular minority group or groups in our culture (e.g., Sociology of Women, Sociology of the Black American, Sociology of Native Americans). Courses in this category may also concentrate on the sociological processes involved in group behavior in general.

OTHER

Courses in sociology that do not fit any of the preceding categories (e.g., Sociology of Consumer Behavior, Sociology of the Small Town in America, Social Aspects of Deafness, American Society).

After all the science courses were coded (classified General, Developmental, Experimental, etc.), class schedules for the 1977-1978 academic year were examined and the number of sections offered (day, evening and weekend credit courses) for each term was determined. Prerequisites and instructional modes (e.g., lecture, lecture-lab) were also determined from the catalogs.

RESULTS

The following table, developed from the procedure described, presents the sociology curriculum offered in two-year colleges for the 1977-78

academic year. As indicated here, every college in the sample listed at least one sociology course in the catalog and offered at least one sociology section during the academic year 1977-78.

Table 2

Sociology Courses in the Two-Year Colleges, 1977-78 Academic Year

Type of Course	Percent of Colleges Listing This Type Course in Catalog (n=175)	Percent of Colleges Listing This Type Course in Class Schedule (n=175)	Percent of Total Sociology Courses Listed on Schedule (n=659)	Percent of Total Sociology Sections Listed on Schedule Lec/Lab (n=3996)	Percent of This Type Course Having a Prerequisite
Elementary	9	7	2	2	0
General/Principles	95	94	30	57	9
Social Problems--General	75	70	20	13	52
Marriage and Family	79	69	19	14	26
Social Institutions--General	14	10	3	3	45
Social Problems--Specific	51	41	18	8	45
Social Institutions--Specific	6	4	2	1	20
Sociology of Group	16	11	4	2	21
Other	14	9	3	1	30

It is interesting to note that 175 colleges (100% of sample) list one or more sociology courses in the college catalog and that all these colleges also list one or more sociology courses in schedules of classes. However, less than one percent of all the sociology courses used instructional modes other than lecture. The fact that 100 percent of the colleges offered sociology clearly establishes the popularity and acceptance of the discipline. Only one other scientific discipline (biology) was offered at every college in the sample.

Although none of the earlier studies reported in the literature actually documented the extent of sociology course offerings, Thornton (1960, 1972) had found that public colleges offered 9.0 units in 1960, and course offerings had increased to 10.3 units in 1972. Although these figures are virtually impossible to interpret accurately (no information as to semester/quarter breakdown or average number of units per course is given) the fact that the average two-year college in our 1977-78 sample offered 3.8 different courses per year clearly indicates an expansion of the sociology curriculum.

The General/Principles course remains the most widely offered and heavily enrolled sociology course. Not only is the course offered at virtually every college in the sample (94%), but the General/Principles course alone accounts for 57 percent of the sociology sections offered during the academic year. The next largest block of sections are devoted to Marriage and Family (14%) and Social Problems/General (13%).

Although for the purposes of classification the Social Problems courses were divided into Social Problems/General and Social Problems/Specific, when these two classifications are collapsed into a single "Social Problems" category, their popularity becomes more evident. When the two classifications are combined, it was found that 85 percent of the colleges list a Social Problems course in the college catalog, 81 percent of the colleges actually offer a Social Problems course, and Social Problems courses account for 21 percent of the sociology sections.

It can therefore be seen that although the breadth of offerings in sociology is great (3.8 courses per college), the enrollments in sociology are concentrated almost entirely in three types of courses: General Principles, Social Problems (General and Specific), and Marriage and Family. These three types of courses account for 92 percent of all the sociology sections offered. When Elementary Sociology, which is a lower-level introductory course, is lumped together with General/Principles under the more commonly used classification of "First Course," these three courses (First Course, Social Problems and Marriage and Family) account for 94 percent of the sections.

Sociology as a discipline accounts for 8 percent of all the science sections offered during the academic year. While this represents a smaller portion of the science offerings than disciplines such as mathematics (33%), psychology (12%), or biology (11%), it is a larger percentage of the science sections than such disciplines as economics (6%), chemistry (5%), or physics (3%).

But sociology accounts for only 4 percent of all the science courses offered. This is further indication of the sociology curriculum's heavy concentration in a few courses. This curricular course concentration can be compared with an area such as physics, which accounts for 6 percent of the science courses but only 3 percent of the sections.

Using the variables of college region, control, and size, it is also interesting to examine the percentage of colleges offering the different types of courses. These data are presented in Table 3. The states included in the different regions are noted in Appendix A.

As Table 3 indicates, there are surprisingly few regional differences. This is especially evident when one takes into account college size, because small colleges are concentrated in the South and large colleges are predominantly found in the West. Regionally, therefore, college sociology curriculum is remarkably consistent.

The same consideration of size must be noted when comparing public and private colleges. Private colleges are almost exclusively small colleges, but there are still a few differences that present themselves. Private colleges are less likely to offer any course in Social Problems, either General or Specific. They often offer courses in Marriage and Family, and are more likely to offer a course in Sociology of Group than one might predict.

College size is the major discriminating factor in terms of two-year college sociology offerings. Quite simply, the larger the college, the more likely it is to offer a wide range of courses. In fact, small colleges offer a mean of 2.7 courses per college, medium-sized colleges offer 4.2 courses, and large colleges present an average of 5.5 different sociology courses during the academic year. (The overall average number

Table 3

Percent of Colleges Offering Sociology Courses

	Total Sample	Region						Control		Size		
		North-east	Middle States	South	Mid-west	Mountain/ Plains	West	Public	Private	Small 1499	Medium 1500-7499	Large 7500+
Course	175	11	21	54	39	22	28	147	28	72	78	25
Elementary	7	9	5	6	15	0	4	8	0	3	8	16
General/Principles	94	91	100	93	87	100	96	94	93	94	92	96
Social Problems-General	70	82	76	59	72	68	82	74	50	61	72	92
Marriage & Family	69	64	57	65	74	59	89	70	64	57	73	92
Social Institutions-General	10	9	14	11	10	0	11	10	11	7	13	8
Social Problems-Specific	41	36	62	20	38	36	71	46	11	25	49	60
Social Institutions-Specific	4	0	10	2	5	5	4	4	4	1	4	12
Sociology of Group	11	9	14	2	15	5	25	10	18	8	9	24
Other	9	9	10	4	13	5	18	11	0	3	14	12

of courses offered for all the colleges in the sample is 3.8). If one adds to this total of 3.8 courses per year the fact that catalogs list an average of one course per college that was not offered during the school year, it is found that the average two-year college catalog lists nearly five sociology courses.

Linearity of curriculum is often indicated by the use of prerequisites, and on the whole, prerequisites are not widely used in sociology. Although slightly over half of the Social Problems / General courses and nearly half of the Social Institutions/General and Social Problems/Specific courses had prerequisites, over 30 percent of the courses studied did not list prerequisites. By far the most common prerequisite was a previous course in General/Principles, although in some cases either any previous sociology course or the instructor's permission would suffice. Test scores or sophomore standing were rarely used as prerequisites.

In conclusion, the data show the sociology curriculum to be highly concentrated around three courses: General/Principles, Social Problems, and Marriage and Family. The range of sociology offerings is influenced primarily by college size, with college region and control accounting for few variations in curriculum.

DISCUSSION

As the data indicate, the two-year college sociology curriculum is basically composed of traditional, four-year college transferable offerings. Despite the fact that studies and statistics consistently point to the fact that the transfer population of two-year colleges is clearly a shrinking minority faction, the transfer-orientation continues to dominate curriculum decisions. Articulation with four-year colleges is still seen as the primary consideration in two-year college curriculum planning.

Perhaps the most distressing note sounded in the literature is that departments of sociology continue in their reluctance to set conceptual goals and to collect and use data to evaluate curricular effectiveness vis-a-vis departmental goals. As Bradshaw and McPherron (1977, p. 19), note, "If curriculum were a problem of social policy, sociologists would be forced to give themselves low marks on the utilization of data in planning."

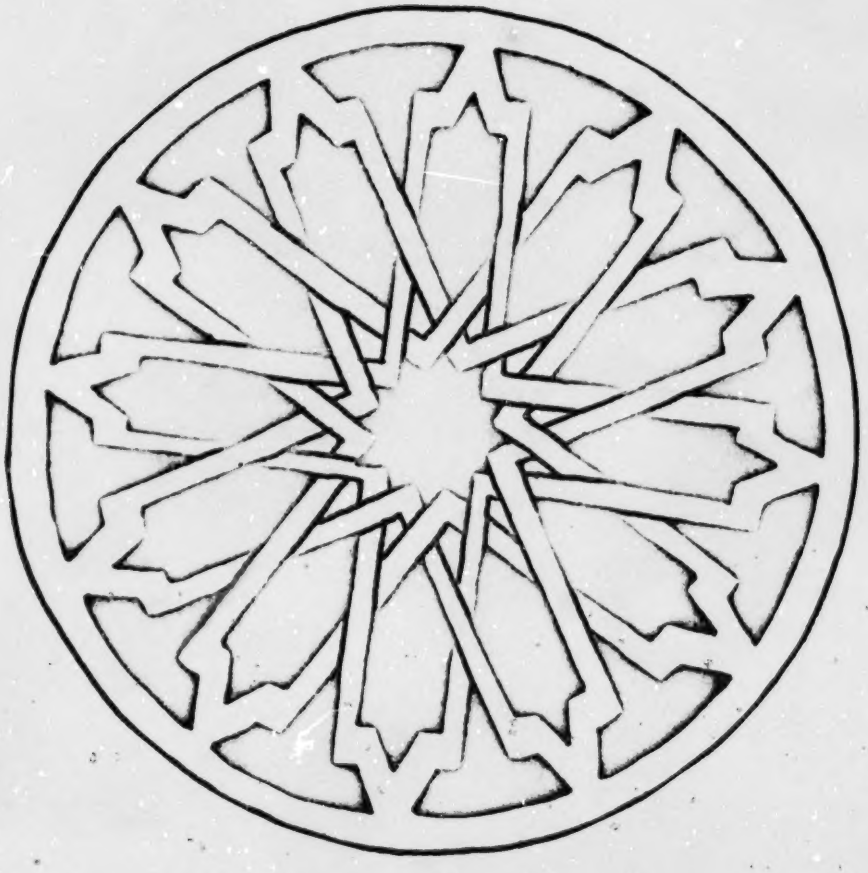
The educational problems confronting sociologists in the two-year college are not unique to this discipline, but sociological methodologies are certainly relevant tools that should be brought to bear in addressing these problems. In any case, the literature does suggest that sociology is certainly misunderstood and at least marginally threatened. It would appear to be a clear sign to sociologists that the time is ripe for them to demonstrate the efficacy of their discipline. If the sociological discipline would channel more of their research efforts into the structure of undergraduate curriculum, this would be an excellent way of communicating the utility of the discipline to the general public.

Despite difficulties, sociology continues to flourish both in terms of the range of offerings and the numbers of sections. The unanimity of sociology's acceptance in the curriculum of our entire sample of 175 two-year colleges is particularly striking. Sociology has obviously been established in a secure enough position that practitioners can afford to experiment with different types of courses and course goals designed specifically for the myriad non-transfer constituencies that now comprise the bulk of two-year college enrollments.

While the American Sociological Association has clearly taken a strong leadership role in these areas, continued and increased assistance is needed, particularly in the two-year college sector. When two-year college administrators and instructors realize that the ASA is truly interested and concerned with their unique problems in delivering sociological knowledge to an incredibly diverse population, two-year college sociologists will take a lead in making curriculum improvements.

The ASA has a standing committee on teaching, a section on Undergraduate Education, a newsletter, and a teaching Resource Center. The need for sociologists to apply their discipline to curriculum development and evaluation has already been noted, and these groups can undoubtedly offer much assistance to two-year colleges and to their sociology instructors.

Proof from our data that sociology is firmly entrenched in the two-year college curriculum is a positive sign. It would be wise for the discipline to periodically reassess changing patterns so as to anticipate potential problems and prevent any diminution of interest in this discipline.



PART II
INSTRUCTION

THE LITERATURE

Information about instructional practices in two-year colleges is fragmented and disparate. Cohen and Brawer (1972) note that "Despite the magnitude of the American educational enterprise, surprisingly little is known about the process of instruction and few agencies are systematically studying the matter" (p. 214). Unfortunately, sociology is no exception, as "there is a dearth of information on the teaching of sociology" (Davenport, 1971, p. 2). The paucity of information regarding the ways in which sociology is taught is probably directly related to a lack of information and knowledge about learning theory in general (Campbell et al., 1977).

In some respects the lack of research validating the effectiveness of different instructional methods can be used as an excuse to ignore the "state-of-the-art." But two-year colleges have staked their reputation upon their ability to teach and should be the leaders in improving undergraduate instruction in higher education (Booth, 1971). Advanced degrees, publications, and research are not a central part of the two-year college mission, but teaching is. As Cohen and Brawer (1972) point out, the "hallmark of a mature, professional instructor is that he accepts responsibility for the effects of his efforts--that is, for the learning manifested by his students" (p. xiii). Fitzgerald (1977) concurs, stating that "Recognizing and experimenting with alternative methods of teaching sociology is an important aspect of our professional responsibilities" (p. 98).

Regrettably, the reclusive nature of the two-year college instructor (Cohen, 1976) makes cooperative efforts difficult, and innovations often require a great deal of interchange between teachers, evaluation experts, media experts, computer programmers, etc. Conklin (1978) notes that the complexity that accompanies most attempted innovations not only makes the innovative process difficult, but it becomes very difficult to transfer the techniques and knowledge to other professors.

This lack of faculty interaction and coordination is supported by Bradshaw and McPherron's study (1977) which showed that two-year college faculty rarely discuss ways in which the theoretical aspects of sociology can be taught effectively. They found that the teaching of concepts "is a highly individualistic experience (and) . . . while concepts seemed to be the key to teaching well, or the rod by which faculty and departments measure successful teaching, disagreement about sequence, distrust of text, lack of discussion and a general unwillingness to operationalize the teaching of concepts still exists" (p. 9).

But the argument that sociological research strategies can be effectively brought to bear to solve problems is as relevant to instructional practices as it is to curriculum issues (Hedley, 1978). The time is ripe for serious study of the various innovative techniques--which ones are effective and lasting and which ones die out (Gelles, 1978).

Instructional Goals and Objectives

Before discussing the ways in which sociology is taught, let us briefly examine the goals and objectives toward which instructors gear their courses, as it is commonly agreed that setting objectives enhances the teaching-learning process (Starkweather, 1971; Vaughn, 1975). As noted earlier, disciplinary concepts are perhaps the primary focus. But community college sociologists, more than any of their colleagues in higher education, also strive to relate sociological content to students' everyday lives (Stein, 1977). Other commonly cited goals include critical thinking (Logan, 1976), creativity and innovativeness (Mariampolski, 1978; Wallis, 1973), and general education, cultural awareness, and satisfaction of student interests (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1978). The diversity of goals almost matches the diversity of students, often without regard for matching students with appropriate course goals.

But the key issue that each sociology instructor must confront is to what extent their sociology course moves students towards the stated course goals. If creativity is a course goal, for example, are students more creative after completing the course?

Critical thinking is one of the most commonly held goals of sociology instructors; yet a study conducted at a leading four-year university showed that neither the inclination nor the ability to engage in critical thinking increased with the amount of sociological training (Logan, 1976). On the other hand, since Logan found that courses designed explicitly to teach critical thinking did result in improved student capabilities, it was not that the course goal was unattainable, it was simply not being accomplished. In short, while instructors usually have a good picture of their course goals, they rarely develop means of evaluating students' achievement of these objectives.

Class Size

The number of students enrolled in a section can have a large impact on the way a course is taught. Although many undergraduate sociology courses are taught to large masses of students (Conklin, 1978; Wallis, 1973), the literature suggests that smaller classes are the rule in two-year colleges.

The data collected by Bradshaw and McPherron (1978) show that the average section of introductory sociology in two-year colleges has 32.8 students, considerably less than small universities and large four-year colleges, where introductory sections average 50 students, and dramatically less than large universities, where the average introductory section enrolls nearly 80 students. Nonintroductory courses enroll even fewer students at two-year colleges, where the average nonintroductory course has 21.5 students.

Sociology enrolls more women than men. If Smelser and Davis (1969) were correct in their assertion that the ratio of men to women in undergraduate sociology is .7, then the average sociology section (using Bradshaw and McPherron's figure of 26.5 students per course) contains 109 males and 15.6 females.

Teaching Methodologies

While considerable discussion pertains to the most desirable and effective type of teaching structure, the traditional lecture-discussion class continues to be by far the most popular (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1978). There has been widespread interest in both modules and "Personalized System of Instruction, but neither have been put into practice with any regularity" (Clark, 1974; Fitzgerald, 1977).

PSI in particular has generated both interest and some zealous advocates. Johnson and Walsh (1978) are not atypical of pro-PSI people in stating that PSI allows students to outperform comparison groups, with lower ability students profiting the most. They suggest that PSI has proven its effectiveness, and "that the burden of proof should now shift to defenders of the status quo" (p. 372). Although this conclusion is corroborated by Rogers, Satariano, and Rogers (1977), others have used PSI or similar styles with mixed results (Halvorson, 1969; Jioia, 1972). Obviously, the jury is still out on the merits of PSI.

Classroom Aids and Activities

The use of simulation games has also generated discussion. Bredemeier (1978) points out that "Simulation games can help quickly, effectively, and dramatically to provide what is too often missing from social science instruction: the referents of abstract concepts" (p. 411). As noted earlier, the teaching of concepts is one of the most commonly held goals of sociology instructors, and Bredemeier feels that the use of gaming allows students to understand "ethnocentrism" or "culture shock" in much the same way that laboratory experiments in physics help students comprehend concepts like "mass" or "force." But while both Greenblatt (1973) and McPherron and Bradshaw (1978) document rising acceptance of simulation gaming, Greenblatt finds that the literature is mixed on the subject of gaming's effectiveness.

Media are also widely used as teaching aids, especially films. "Virtually every department makes use of films; films are used extensively or occasionally in 95 percent of all first courses. Thus, teachers of sociology are surprisingly heavy consumers of educational films considering that journals offer almost no space for review of films, literature or workshops do not encourage their creative use, and professional meetings do not preview and discuss films" (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977, p. 14). Some go so far as to advocate teaching introductory sociology through film rather than lecture as the primary teaching tool (Smith, 1973).

Other forms of media are also seen as useful teaching aids. Stoll (1973) proposes utilizing videotape in the classroom, and no doubt videotaping facilities and equipment are now more readily available than ever before. Instructors can also make use of slides, the advantage being that they are easily put together by the individual instructor (Bronson, 1975).

Because community-school interaction is an integral part of the two-year college philosophy, the use of field work assignments can be a productive learning device (Rippetoe, 1977; Watcke, 1975). VanPelt (1969) advocates the use of student-community interaction as a "resource for

interpreting sociological theory in a frame of reference quite relevant to the student" (p. 115).

Reading Materials

As expected, the literature points to the dominant usage of the textbook in virtually all sociology courses (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1977; Geertsen, 1977). But since some feel that as publishers intensify their marketing efforts to a broader range of texts, the chances of making a poor text selection increase, Geertsen (1977) presents a system for instructors to evaluate different texts. The need for this becomes more critical as student reading levels continue to plummet, because "the most important single factor in whether or not a student will read and understand a textbook is its difficulty" (Geertsen, 1977, p. 112). It is interesting to note that although the faculty see themselves as highly autonomous (Campbell et al., 1977), common texts for the introductory course were prescribed by 54 percent of the two-year college sociology departments surveyed by Bradshaw and McPherron (1977).

At the same time, some instructors are quite cynical about sociology students' abilities and/or willingness to read textbooks. This sentiment is aptly summed up by Spencer (1977), who states, "Students are not into reading and do anything to get out of it" (p. 13). Perhaps because of some of the problems encountered with textual materials, sociology department chairpersons anticipate increased utilization of nontextual reading materials (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1978). This may be helpful when instructors want to gear their reading assignments to social groups that are traditionally not mentioned in textbooks (Kirschner, 1973).

Testing and Grading

Sociology instructors rely heavily on objective tests for evaluating students (Bradshaw & McPherron, 1978; Gardner & Abraham, 1978). Gardner and Abraham (1978) point out the danger in this, namely, that students' already deficient language skills will become progressively worse if they are not called upon to write.

Although much of the literature bemoans students' reluctance to read and write, there are signs that some students are both willing and able to write if they are given encouragement and recognition. Wayne County Community College (Michigan) publishes a journal consisting of student research papers (Watcke & Winterfield, 1979). The possibility of having a paper published provides extra incentive for students to do outstanding work, and the journal concept could be easily adapted at many community colleges where faculty are willing to commit some extra time and effort.

Because many instructors complain that it is difficult if not impossible to fairly grade subjective tests, Gardner and Abraham suggest criteria to remedy this problem. Different students perform well on different types of tests (Hedley, 1978) and thus, it may be helpful to offer a variety of tests. However, instructors should be aware that presenting difficult test items early in a test can be detrimental to students' performance because this raises anxiety levels (Rosenfeld, 1978).

Faculty

Despite a plethora of reports about teaching effectiveness, little is known about what traits make an instructor "effective." Most of the information about sociology faculty is descriptive, concentrating on degrees, age, and background.

In the early 1960s, few two-year college sociologists held the doctorate (Sibley, 1963). At this time, Davenport (1971) found that 6.6 percent of the sociology instructors in the South had doctorates. Based upon Smelser and Davis' (1969) prediction of a shortage of sociologists holding the doctorate, one would have expected that two-year colleges were not likely to attract doctorate-level sociologists. Yet by 1973, McGinnis and Solomon foresaw "a dismal picture of future employment prospects for sociologists who hold the Ph.D. degree" (p. 57).

When the job market for sociologists changed, many became interested in teaching positions at previously not considered two-year colleges.

"In fact, given current academic market trends, more Ph.D.'s in sociology will probably be seeking and taking positions on community college faculties. While this may be viewed as a positive trend on the one hand, it also introduces the possibility that unless the discipline places more emphasis on teaching and rewards such activity, this Ph.D. influx may create discontent" (Stein, 1977, pp. 28-29).

But while the usefulness of doctoral-level training in two-year colleges is debatable, no one would argue that instructors should have some level of undergraduate and graduate training in the discipline they teach. Stoddard (1968) attacked the professionalism of the two-year college sociological community, claiming that faculty had little sociological background, and what little they had was outdated. Although Davenport's data (1971) contradict some of Stoddard's assertions, many of his claims were validated. Among other things, Davenport found that many sociology instructors had most of their teaching experience outside of sociology, fewer than half had over 40 semester hours of sociology, and many instructors had little disciplinary affiliation. Stein (1977) also claims that two-year college sociologists are not involved in professional networks.

But more recent data would indicate that progress has been made in professionalizing the faculty. In over two-thirds of the two-year colleges studied, Bradshaw and McPherron (1978) found that every instructor had some graduate sociology training. Although the literature does not indicate any growth in disciplinary affiliation, it would be helpful if community college sociology instructors would form some sort of communications network (Booth, 1971).

If nothing else, the review of the literature in two-year college sociology instruction points up the need for continued efforts in this area. The concern of the American Sociological Association and the contributions of a journal like Teaching Sociology give hope that sociology pedagogy will continue to improve.

METHODOLOGY

In our study of instructional practices in the sciences, the first step was to establish a random sample of colleges. The procedures used in putting this sample (N=175) together are described in Part I. Each college president who agreed to participate in the study was asked to name a contact person at the school, who was given the title "on-campus facilitator". All communication and correspondence between the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and the sample colleges was conducted through the 175 on-campus facilitators.

Once the college catalogs were obtained from each school, Center staff read each course description in the catalog and put courses in the appropriate category according to the Course Classification System for the Sciences (see Part I). These courses were then arrayed in six groups. The sociology courses for each school were listed along with all other behavioral and social science courses listed in the catalog.

The next step in the process involved counting the science course offerings in the Fall 1977 day and evening schedules of classes. Each college's schedule was reviewed one section at a time. Using the course list developed from the college catalog, courses that were properly categorized as science courses were identified for inclusion in this study. Each science course section was then underlined. A list was developed for each college that showed the courses offered and the number of sections of the course that were listed in the schedule of classes.

The selection of individual class sections was done by drawing every thirteenth section in each of the six major science areas. After randomly selecting the first college, the system was automatically self-randomizing. Each sampled section was recorded on a checklist for the facilitator at each school. This checklist included the name of the instructor listed as teaching the section, the course title, section number, and the days and time the class met. A copy of this checklist was kept at the Center to tally the surveys as they were received.

A survey form (Appendix B) for each instructor was mailed to the campus facilitator, together with instructions for completing the

questionnaire and a return envelope addressed to the same facilitator. The return envelope had the instructor's name listed as the return address and was clearly marked "Confidential." This enabled the on-campus facilitator to keep an exact record of who had responded without opening the envelope, a technique which guaranteed confidentiality to the respondent while also enabling the facilitator to follow up on the retrieval of surveys from nonrespondents.

Questionnaires were mailed to 1,683 instructors. Since the surveys were mailed after the completion of the fall term (between February 20 and April 10, 1978), 114 surveys were not deliverable, due to faculty dismissal, retirement, death, etc. An additional 77 sections were cancelled. Of the 1,492 deliverable surveys, 1,275 were returned. This established an overall response rate of 85.5 percent. Questionnaires were retrieved from 100 percent of the faculty sampled at nearly 69 percent of the colleges. Table 4 shows the relationship between completed surveys in the different disciplines and the percent of the total number of class sections offered in these disciplines in the 1977-78 academic year.

Of the 1,275 responses, 94 surveys were retrieved from instructors of sociology. The results reported here are based upon these responses.

RESULTS

Instructors of sociology teach their courses much like their colleagues in the other social sciences (anthropology, psychology, economics). However, some differences appear when sociologists are compared with the science faculty as a whole.

Enrollments

The average sociology section initially enrolls 35.3 students (16.4 males and 18.9 females). Out of this group, 29.4 students receive grades, for an 83.3 percent course completion rate. Both the enrollment and completion figures are slightly higher than the total science group, which showed an initial enrollment of 31.8 students and a completion rate of 79.6 percent.

Table 4

Relationship between Completed Surveys and Class Sections

Discipline	Returns on the Class Section Survey-- % of Total (n=1,275)	'77-'78 Academic Year--% of Total Lecture Sections (n=49,275)
Agriculture	3.0	3.0
Biology	12.5	10.5
Engineering	11.3	11.0
Math/Comp. Sci.	30.8	32.5
Chemistry	6.4	5.1
Earth/Space	3.6	3.6
Physics	3.5	3.2
Interdisciplinary Natural Sci.	2.3	2.7
Anthro & Interdis. Soc. Sci.	2.4	3.0
Psychology	11.2	11.6
Sociology	7.4	8.1
Economics	5.4	5.6

Combining these enrollment figures with the curriculum figures presented in Part I, we find that the mean initial enrollment figure for sociology programs is 806 students per academic year, with 617 students completing a course and receiving a grade.

Although the literature suggests that introductory courses have significantly larger class sections than other sociology courses, our figures do not support this finding. Our data show no significant difference between introductory course enrollments and class size in the other sociology courses. While much of the literature notes the problems of dealing with large sections, this is not a major problem for two-year colleges, where only 13 percent of the introductory sections have more than 50 students. In fact, 15 percent of the sections enroll fewer than 20 students.

Allotment of Class Time

Instructors were asked to indicate the percentage of class time they devote to different classroom activities, and, as expected, the largest block of class time was spent lecturing (Table 5).

Table 5

Allotment of Class Time in Sociology and Total Science Classes

	Sociology Classes	Total Science Classes
Lectures	48.8%	44.8%
Class Discussion	23.4	15.0
Quizzes/Exams	7.9	9.7
Viewing and/or Listening to Media	7.7	4.4
Student Verbal Presentations	5.8	2.6
Simulation Games	2.6	.9
Guest Lectures	2.1	.8
Lecture/Demonstration Experiments	.5	3.2
Field Trips	.4	.7
Other (mainly lab work)	.8	17.9

In addition to the allotment of class time, we also looked at the percentage of faculty utilizing these different class activities. As one would expect, all instructors lecture, and nearly 60 percent indicate they lecture more than half of the class time. Guest lectures were given in 30.9 percent of the sociology courses, compared to only 11.8 percent of all science courses. Nearly half of the sociology instructors had their students give verbal presentations, and while this was higher than the science faculty in general, it was only slightly higher than the rest of their social science colleagues. This similarity of teaching style also extended to use of classroom discussion, where social science instructors were the most frequent and heaviest users. A surprisingly small percentage (6.4%) of the sociology instructors took their classes on field trips, but most of the instructors made use of media.

Media Use

As the literature suggests, sociologists often use films as a teaching aid. Nearly 80 percent of the instructors show films, and nearly 20 percent of these instructors show films frequently. These figures are much higher than those reported by the science faculty in general.

No other form of media had the widespread usage found with films, but approximately one-third of the sociologists used slides, audiotapes, overhead transparencies, videotapes, and maps/charts or illustrated displays. Very few instructors developed their own materials, although 8.5 percent did develop their own slide presentations.

Reading Materials

Textbooks were used in every sociology course, and sociology instructors assigned more pages of textbook reading than any other discipline--an average of 420 pages. The majority of instructors were well satisfied with their texts, although 8.6 percent indicated they definitely planned on changing to a new textbook. Only 46.2 percent of the instructors were allowed to independently choose their textbook. The rest of the faculty were either assigned a text, served on a textbook selection

committee, or had to verify their selection with the department chairperson.

None of the other types of reading materials were used by as large a percentage of the instructors as the textbook. Although the percentage of faculty using these other materials is small, laboratory materials (16%), collections of reading (35%), reference books (21%), journal/magazines (45%), newspapers (23%), and syllabi or handouts (69%) all added to the students' reading load. When one adds the textbook reading to the total group mean for all the above noted reading materials, the average reading assignment in sociology classes is 578 pages.

Grading Practices

Grading practices in sociology courses were fairly traditional, except that in nearly one-third of all sociology sections no failing grades were assigned. In these courses the student either received a passing grade or "no credit." Table 6 details sociology grading schemes.

Table 6
Grading Practices

	Sociology Classes	Total Science Classes
A B C D F	69.1	73.6
A B C D/No credit	22.3	15.3
ABC/No credit	5.3	5.6
Pass/Fail	1.1	1.4
Pass/No Credit	5.3	2.8
Other	5.3	4.9

We also looked at the extent to which various classroom activities determine students' grades. Objective tests were the most prevalent means of evaluation, although sociology instructors used a wide variety of

activities. The next most heavily weighted class assignments were essay exams and papers written out of class.

Table 7

Grading Emphasis

	Counted 25% or More toward Grade		Included but Counted Less than 25%	
	Soc.	Total	Soc.	Total
Quick score/objective test	64.9	59.6	12.8	15.3
Essay exams	48.9	40.8	18.1	14.7
Papers written outside of class	33.0	8.9	38.3	25.1
Research reports	10.6	2.7	24.5	14.2
Participation in class discussion	6.4	1.9	53.2	32.5
Regular class attendance	5.3	2.8	48.9	32.0
Oral recitations	4.3	1.9	30.9	16.5
Papers written in class	4.3	4.9	21.3	8.1
Field reports	2.1	1.8	22.3	9.2
Homework	2.1	6.5	10.6	31.5
Nonwritten projects	1.1	1.8	11.7	8.1
Individual disc. with instructor	1.1	.8	9.6	8.9
Workbook completion	1.1	3.5	6.4	14.1

The most commonly used type of test question is multiple response, which is frequently utilized by 77.7 percent of the sociology instructors. Sociologists ask their students to write essay exams more than any other discipline. Essay questions are frequently used by 62.8 percent of the

instructors, and seldom used by another 20.2 percent. Completion type questions were the only other form of test item that drew a fairly large response, used frequently by 14.9 percent and seldom by 25.5 percent.

Instructor Goals and Student Competencies

Although instructors may desire a wide range of course outcomes, we asked them to pick one objective from sets of four that they most wanted their students to achieve. The sociologists' responses, which are shown in Table 8, were quite similar to the other social sciences but revealed some cleavage points with the rest of the science faculty.

Instructors also indicated the importance of various student competencies. Specifically, how necessary were these skills for the student to perform well on course exams and quizzes. Table 9 details the responses of the sociology faculty, as well as the total science faculty, and the social science instructors (anthropology and interdisciplinary, psychology, and economics).

Out-of-Class Activities

In addition to classroom activities and course goals, we asked the instructors to note which, if any, out-of-class activities were required or recommended. The list of activities included on-campus educational films, other films, field trips, television programs, museum attendance, volunteer service, outside lectures, and tutoring. None of these activities were required by more than 10 percent of the faculty, although television programs were recommended by 64 percent, outside lectures by 52 percent, other films by 47 percent, and on-campus films by 40 percent. All of these percentages are higher than for the science faculty as a whole, suggesting that sociology instructors are more likely to involve their students in out-of-class activities.

Faculty

In 1977, 17 percent of the sociology faculty had obtained a doctorate degree, 81.9 percent had a master's, and 1.1 percent had the

Table 8

Desired Qualities for Students

	Desired Qualities	Sociology	Total
Set 1	Understand/appreciate interrelationships of science and society	52.1	26.9
	Understand scientific research literature	5.3	1.5
	Apply principles learned in course to solve qualitative and/or quantitative problems	39.4	61.4
	Develop proficiency in lab method and techniques of discipline	0	8.3
Set 2	Relate knowledge acquired in class to real world systems and problems	78.7	48.2
	Understand principles, concepts, and terminology of the discipline	18.1	42.6
	Develop appreciation/understanding of scientific method	1.1	2.2
	Gain "hands-on" or field experience in applied practice	1.1	6.1
Set 3	Learn to use tools of research in the sciences	1.1	8.6
	Gain qualities of mind useful in further education	20.2	32.9
	Understand self	28.7	9.4
	Develop the ability to think critically	47.9	46.6

Table 9

Desired Student Outcomes

	Soc. (n=94)	Total (n=1275)	Soc. Sci. (n=243)
Mastery of a Skill			
Very Important	10.6	51.0	22.2
Not Important	44.7	17.3	32.5
Acquaintance with Concepts of the Discipline			
Very Important	86.2	83.1	84.8
Not Important	2.1	1.3	1.2
Recall of Specific Information			
Very Important	33.0	42.7	43.6
Not Important	12.8	5.7	3.7
Understand Significance of Certain Works, Events, Phenomena			
Very Important	53.2	44.9	53.1
Not Important	4.3	17.2	8.6
Ability to Synthesize Course Content			
Very Important	62.8	46.5	54.3
Not Important	0	10.0	3.7
Relationship of Concepts to Students' Own Values			
Very Important	59.6	24.0	45.7
Not Important	7.4	35.5	12.8

bachelor's. The employment status of the faculty was 80.0 percent full-time, 11.7 percent part-time, and 8.5 percent division chairperson.

The largest percentage of the faculty had been teaching in a two-year college for five to ten years (42.6%). Only 4.3 percent of the sociology faculty had been hired within the last year or had been at a two-year college more than 20 years, but this was also typical for the science faculty as a whole.

Many types of instructional assistance were available to the faculty, and in most cases the faculty utilized these services (Table 10).

Table 10
Assistance Available to Faculty

	Assistance Available	Utilized
Clerical help	85.1	78.7
Media production facilities/assistance	74.5	54.3
Library/bibliographic assistance	71.3	45.7
Test-scoring facilities	54.3	30.9
Tutors	35.1	20.2
Paraprofessional aides	9.6	8.5
Readers	8.5	3.2

Clerical help is obviously the most popular service, and is almost universally utilized when the service is available. Except for paraprofessional aides, who are usually utilized when available, no other services are as enthusiastically received as clerical help. Perhaps of even greater importance is what the instructors felt they needed to make their courses even more effective. The more popular choices are noted in Table 11.

Table 11
Sociology Instructors Would Like

Students better prepared to handle course	53.0
Availability of more media	48.9
Instructor release time	47.9
Professional development opportunities	39.4
Smaller class	39.4
More interaction with colleagues, administrators	27.7
Stricter prerequisites	23.4
More clerical assistance	22.3
More readers/paraprofessionals	13.8
More freedom to choose materials	12.8

Less than 10 percent selected options such as a larger class, less interaction from colleagues or administrators, fewer prerequisites, or different course description and goals.

DISCUSSION

While the data collected in this study corroborate many of the previous findings, and expand our knowledge about how sociology is taught in two-year colleges, in some ways this study points out the need for more research even more than it answers old questions. This is not to downgrade the importance of establishing a baseline of information about sociology instruction, as the necessity for a good foundation of knowledge is clear. But as we begin to answer basic questions regarding how many instructors show films, how many students are enrolled in each class, what are the course goals, etc., the need for further pedagogical research grows more evident.

Our review of the literature on sociology instruction establishes that there are virtually no undisputed facts regarding a "best" or "preferred" method of instruction. While almost everyone agrees that lectures are often boring, and at times inappropriate, they are universally employed. Some educators feel that indicators of an excellent instructor include the use of a wide range of media and instructional techniques, but there is really little evidence to support the notion that variety equals excellence. In short, all we know about the field of instruction is that we know very little.

But before going too far into a discussion of the needs for future research that this study reveals, let us review the implications of the accumulated data. First, what do the enrollment figures tell us? We find that sociology, despite claims of rapidly shrinking enrollments, shows an initial enrollment of over 800 students per year.

As far as classroom activities are concerned, sociologists are quite similar to other social scientists. They lecture a great deal, but also devote a large block of class time to discussion. As the literature suggests, sociologists show films much more regularly than most science instructors. Bradshaw and McPherron's (1977) recommendation that sociology journals should review films as well as textbooks certainly bears repeating. A journal like Teaching Sociology could run a film column to help sociologists select materials they would like to use in their classroom.

The reading load assigned by sociology instructors seems to argue strongly for the use of "streams" of instruction, as there can be no doubt that many students would drown amidst the nearly 600 pages of reading that the average sociology instructor assigns. One must wonder what percentage of sociology students complete and comprehend their assigned reading. If the curriculum would separate the transfer-oriented students, then the majority of courses could gear reading content and level to the majority of students in the class who do not intend to go on to a four-year college. As the situation stands now, where general interest, occupational, transfer, remedial, and adult learners are all grouped

together, it is impossible to assign reading that is appropriate for all the students. Perhaps a restructuring of the curriculum would give teachers the opportunity to select reading materials that are relevant, readable, and comprehensible for students in every category.

Similar changes that would tailor instruction to student needs might be made in the area of course grades. Our data reveal 30 percent of the courses have no failing grade, while the other 70 percent is comprised of the traditional "A B C D F" scheme. For the student who is taking the course for general interest, there seems little need to assign a "fail" grade. On the other hand, transfer students may find the aversive motivation of a failing grade helps them finish reading assignments, attend class, and write papers. The academic world is competitive. We would therefore recommend that all nontransfer "streams" should utilize nonpunitive grading, but that the transfer "streams" should consider maintaining the "fail" grade. Perhaps the American Sociological Association Task Group on Undergraduate Teaching could conduct a study to see if different grading formats affect student motivation, attendance, and performance, with a particular emphasis on the differential performance of various student groups.

The need to "stream" both students and instruction is also an issue when examining the instructors' course goals. It is rather surprising that in a forced choice situation, more than four times as many sociology instructors chose "Relate knowledge acquired in class to real world systems and problems" over "Understand principles, concepts, and terminology of the discipline." The latter goal would align itself more with a four-year college orientation, and so perhaps it is a good sign that so many instructors chose the less theoretical and more practical alternative. Two-year college sociologists also gave a fair amount of support (20%) to the goal "Understand self," which is generally not acknowledged as a legitimate goal in four-year institutions. But should not students know their instructors' goals before the class begins? The serious transfer student might be more inclined to take courses where instructors' goals are closely parallel with university offerings, but perhaps the adult learner or occupational student would seek out the instructor who is "people" rather than "theory" oriented.

Typically, sociologists hold "critical thinking" as a primary course goal. Two-year college sociologists also strongly uphold this objective, but some studies question whether sociology courses teach critical thinking at all. If this trait is to remain a widely-held goal, then instructors should begin to evaluate whether their course really impacts the students' ability to think. No one would question the legitimacy of the goal, but if the goal is rarely accomplished, perhaps it is unrealistic. Certainly instructors should be aware if their course goals are being accomplished, but one senses that perhaps this is not the case.

The data do show that two-year colleges are employing a more highly-degreed faculty, as 17 percent of the sociology instructors hold the doctorate. Unfortunately, our study does not reveal the area in which an individual achieved his/her highest degree, but it would be interesting to see if Stoddard's (1968) claim that two-year college faculty lack professionalism and have little sociological background is still true. We suspect that the faculty hired in the last ten years have appreciably upgraded the two-year college faculty and Stoddard's claims are no longer applicable.

Not surprisingly, the instructors expressed a desire for more qualified and better prepared students, more media, release time, professional development, and smaller classes. Obviously little can be done to improve the students' background once they are enrolled in college, except if more prerequisites were used. But while 53 percent of the faculty wanted better students, only 23 percent desired stricter prerequisites.

In many ways this study points out a lack of knowledge about the teaching-learning process, about what instructional methods work best for different personality types. Perhaps "flexibility" helps a teacher who teaches by lecture-discussion, but hinders a teacher who uses PSI. While there seems to be little agreement over how to choose an "effective" instructor, there also seems to be little effort to find the answer to the question.

The literature clearly shows that every methodology works well for some, poorly for others. In Dateline '79 Cohen (1969) predicts that

colleges will match teachers with teaching styles, and learners with learning styles. Now it is 1979, but our progress in these areas is almost nonexistent. The enormity of the research efforts needed in these areas clearly points up the need for large scale federally-funded research.

CONCLUSION

Sociology education is firmly entrenched in the two-year college curriculum, and though there are some grave predictions of a dark future, few signs indicate that sociology is in any serious trouble. In fact, at least one sociology course is offered at virtually every two-year college in the United States at some point in the academic year.

The average two-year college offers nearly four different courses in sociology, and almost 23 sections per academic year. Projecting these figures to the universe of two-year colleges, we find that approximately 28,000 sections of sociology are offered per year. Coupled with an average section enrollment of 35 students, sociology's yearly enrollment is nearly one million students.

Perhaps the major problem confronting sociology lies in the fact that the general populace is not well informed about the scope, limitations, and boundaries of the discipline. Unfortunately, there is little agreement on these issues within the academic community, so the chances of students' obtaining a clear understanding of the nature of the discipline appear to be diminished.

The sociology curriculum is mainly comprised of courses whose largest common denominator seems to be a traditional format and approach. Modular packages and "streams" of instruction are ideas well suited to the two-year college as it exists today, but implementation of these concepts has been slow. Because radical departures from the current curriculum are expensive to implement, and there are no guarantees that experimentation will be successful, few community colleges are going to actively pursue a goal of curriculum reform. Therefore it seems clear that funding for these experiments must come from either the NSF or the ASA if two-year colleges are to be encouraged to be innovative.

The instructional methodologies employed by sociology instructors are quite similar to other social science instructors. They also use similar testing devices and hold similar course goals. But since little is known about the various methodologies and technologies as far as their effectiveness is concerned, much progress must be made in educational research to determine the efficacy of the components of the teaching process.

Fortunately, the ASA seems to be in tune with the problems and needs of undergraduate sociology. Solutions will not be easy to develop or implement, but the commitment of professional sociologists to the growth and development of their discipline should insure a bright future for sociology.

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APPENDIX A

Region 1 NORTHEAST

Connecticut

Greater Hartford
Mitchell
Quinebaug

Massachusetts

Bay Path
Bunker Hill
Mt. Wachusett

Maine

University of Maine/
Augusta

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Tech.
White Pines

New York

Cayuga County
Genesee
Hudson Valley
North Country

Vermont

Champlain
Vermont Col. of
Norwich U.

Region 2 MIDDLE STATES

Delaware

Delaware Tech. and C.C./
Terry Campus
Goldey Beacom

Maryland

Dundalk
Hagerstown
Harford
Howard
Villa Julie

New Jersey

Atlantic
Middlesex County

Pennsylvania

Allegheny County/Boyce Campus
Delaware County
Harcum
Keystone
Horthampton County
Northeastern Christian

West Virginia

West Virginia Northern
Potomac State

Region 3 SOUTH

Alabama

James Faulkner State
John C. Calhoun State
Lurleen B. Wallace State
Northwest Alabama State

Arkansas

Central Baptist
Mississippi County
Westark

Florida

Brevard
Edison
Florida
Palm Beach
Seminole
Valencia

Georgia

Atlanta
Bainbridge
Clayton
Floyd
Georgia Military
Middle Georgia
South Georgia

Kentucky

Southeast

Mississippi

Itawamba
Mary Holmes
Mississippi Gulf Coast/
Jefferson Davis Campus
Pearl River
Southwest Mississippi
Wood

North Carolina

Chowan College
Coastal Carolina
Edgecombe Tech.
Halifax City Tech.
Lenoir
Richmond Tech.
Roanoke-Chowan Tech.
Wake Tech.

South Carolina

Greenville Tech.
University of South Carolina/
Lancaster

Tennessee

Jackson State
Martin
Morristown
Shelby State

Texas

Angelina
Lamar University/Orange Branch
San Antonio
Vernon Regional
Weatherford

Virginia

Central Va.
Northern Va./Alexandria
New River
Southern Seminary
Tidewater
Thomas Nelson
Wytheville

Region 4 MIDWEST

Illinois

Central YMCA
Danville
Highland
Kishwaukee
Lincoln Land
Oakton
Waubonsee
William Rainey Harper

Iowa

Clinton
Hawkeye Institute of Technology
Indian Hills
Iowa Lakes
Marshalltown
Southeastern

Michigan

Bay de Noc
Delta
Kalamazoo Valley
Kirtland
Monroe County
Oakland
Suomi

Minnesota

Austin
North Hennepin
Northland
University of Minnesota Tech.
Willmar

Missouri

St. Paul's
Three Rivers

Nebraska

Metropolitan Tech.
Platte Tech.

Ohio

Edison State
Loraine County
Northwest Tech.
Shawnee State
Sinclair
University of Toledo
Comm. and Tech.

Wisconsin

District One Tech.
Lakeshore Tech.
Milwaukee Area Tech.
University Center System/Sheboygan
Western Wisconsin Tech.

Region 5 MOUNTAIN PLAIN

Colorado

Arapahoe
Community College of Denver
Auraria Campus
Morgan
Northeastern

Kansas

Barton County
Central
Coffeyville
Hesston
St. John's

Montana

Miles

North Dakota

North Dakota St. Sch. of Science

Oklahoma

Connors State
Hillsdale Free Will Baptist
Northern Oklahoma
South Oklahoma City
St. Gregory's

South Dakota

Presentation

Utah

College of Eastern Utah
Utah Tech.

Wyoming

Central Wyoming

APPENDIX A (continued)

Region 6 WEST

Alaska

Ketchikan

Arizona

Cochise
Pima

California

American River
Butte
Citrus
College of San Mateo
College of the Desert
College of the Sequoias
Fresno City College
Hartnell
Lassen
Los Angeles Pierce
Mendocino
Merced
Mt. San Jacinto
Saddleback
San Bernardino Valley
San Diego Mesa
Santa Rosa

Nevada

Clark County

Oregon

Chemeketa
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Washington

Green River
Lower Columbia
Peninsula
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